DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 039 CE 061 126

TITLE	Success Stories: From Learning to Earning.
INSTITUTION	Pennsylvania State Dept. of Education, Harrisburg. Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education.
PUB DATE	92
NOTE	28p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Achievement Gains; *Adult Basic Education; Adult Development; Adult Literacy; *Adult Students; *Biographies; Life Events; Lifelong Learning; *Literacy Education; *Outcomes of Education; Program Effectiveness; State Programs; *Success
IDENTIFIERS	*Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

This publication presents the stories of 10 men and women who overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles to become self-supporting citizens of Pennsylvania. Their stories tell how, through their participation in Pennsylvania's adult basic education and literacy programs, they were aided in their successful struggles to enhance their reading and mathematics skills and to develop new career interests and opportunities. The 10 outstanding adult students are grouped by county; counties are presented alphabetically. The students and the programs in which they participated are as follows: James Gourley, Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12; Joyce Upshaw, Connelley Skill Learning Center; Bernard Zenk, Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council; Betty Ann Frisby, Chester County Opportunities Industrialization Centers (OIC), Inc.; David Wingard, Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5; Khom Tuy, Lancaster Adult Enrichment Center; Irene Allen, Eagleville Hospital; Juanita James, Germantown Women's Educational Program; Alice Redman, Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program; and Ivan Cooper, Philadelphia OIC, Inc. Each story relates the student's life history, describes his or her adult basic education or literacy program experience, and tells how his or her life has changed. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED345039

BUREAU OF ADULT BASIC
AND LITERACY
EDUCATION PROGRAMS

ACHIEVEMENT
ABLE
Achievement
Award
EXCELLENCE BASED ON LEARNING

PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
HONORS

OUTSTANDING
ADULT STUDENTS
IN SUCCESS
STORIES

SUCCESS STORIES:

FROM LEARNING TO EARNING

1992

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Christopher

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CE061126

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Robert P. Casey, *Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Donald M. Carroll, Jr., *Secretary*

Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education
Peter Garland, *Acting Commissioner*

Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education
John Christopher, *Director*

SUCCESS STORIES SELECTION COMMITTEE

Sue Barron, *AdvancE*
PDE Resource Center

Samuel Brinton, *ABE Director*
East Pennsboro Area School District

Yvonne Edwards, *Executive Director*
Mon Valley OIC

Peggy Greene, *Instructor*
Harrisburg State Hospital

John Heisey, *Supervisor*
Lebanon Adult Learning Center

Ralph Morgan, *Associate Executive Director*
Schuylkill IU #29

Dan Partin, *353 Advisor*
PDE, Bureau of ABLE

Frank Paul, *Instructor*
Red Land Community Action Program

Beverly Thompson, *Instructor*
Reading Area Community College

Cynthia West, *Community Relations Officer*
Dauphin Deposit Bank

LEARNING TO LEARNING FROM LEARNING

1992

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

Dear Reader:

In this publication, *SUCCESS STORIES: From Learning to Earning*, you will read the inspiring stories of 10 outstanding men and women who have overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles to become self-supporting citizens of our Commonweath. Through their participation in Pennsylvania's adult basic education and literacy programs, they were aided in their successful struggles to enhance their reading and math skills and to develop new career interests and opportunities. The perseverance and hope demonstrated by these courageous adults is truly moving.

Ellen and I have been strongly supportive of adult basic education efforts in our state. Over the past five years, we've backed up that support with an historic state investment in adult literacy programs. We are convinced that it takes this kind of educational commitment to ensure that every citizen of our state has the opportunity to reach his/her highest potential in life.

Nothing is more essential to the future competitiveness of our economy and vitality of our society than the education of our people. When people cannot read, they cannot participate fully in their workplaces or their communities. And we all suffer because of it.

That's why it's so important for all of us to support efforts to improve literacy in our state. State government will continue its financial and moral commitment. But our success depends on the active involvement of everyone who cares about our future as a state and as a people.

I hope that *SUCCESS STORIES: From Learning to Earning* will inspire all of us to help bring the joys and rewards of literacy and lifelong learning to every Pennsylvanian.

Sincerely,

Robert Casey

Robert P. Casey
Governor,
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ADAMS COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: James R. Gourley
Sponsor: Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12 4

ALLEGHENY COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: Joyce Upshaw
Sponsor: Connelley Skill Learning Center 6

Outstanding Adult Student: Bernard Zenk
Sponsor: Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council 8

CHESTER COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: Betty Ann G. Frisby
Sponsor: Chester County OIC, Inc. 10

ERIE COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: David Wingard
Sponsor: Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5 12

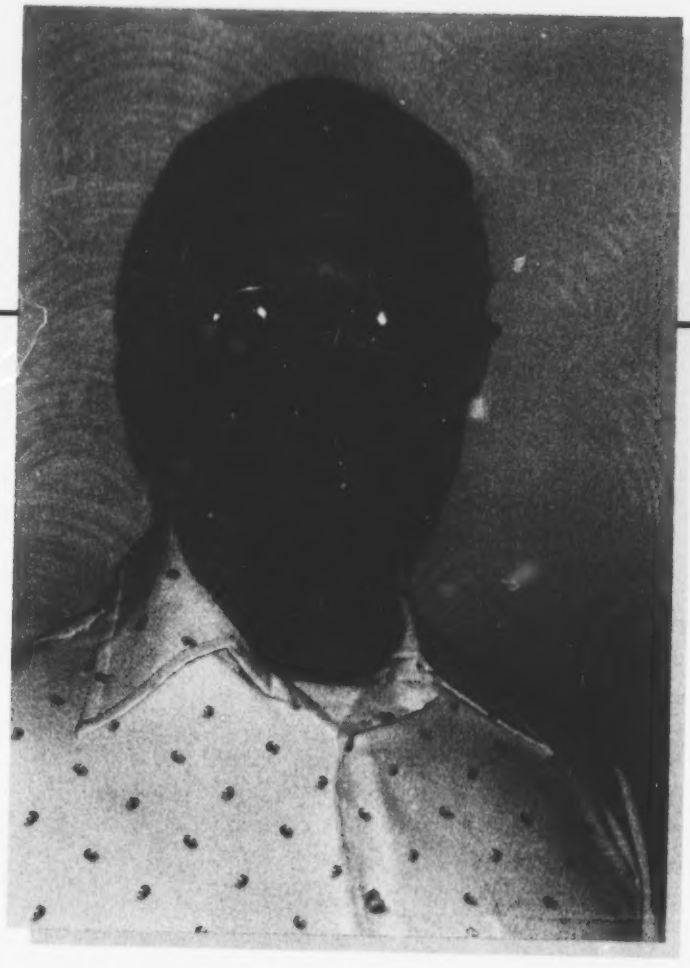
LANCASTER COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: Khom Tuy
Sponsor: Lancaster Adult Enrichment Center 14

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: Irene Allen
Sponsor: Eagleville Hospital 16

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY
Outstanding Adult Student: Juanita James
Sponsor: Germantown Women's Educational Program 18

Outstanding Adult Student: Alice Redman
Sponsor: Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program 20

Outstanding Adult Student: Ivan Cooper
Sponsor: Philadelphia OIC, Inc. 22



"Instead of living life being illiterate and carrying that fear, I can now hold my head high and feel good about life."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JAMES R. GOURLEY

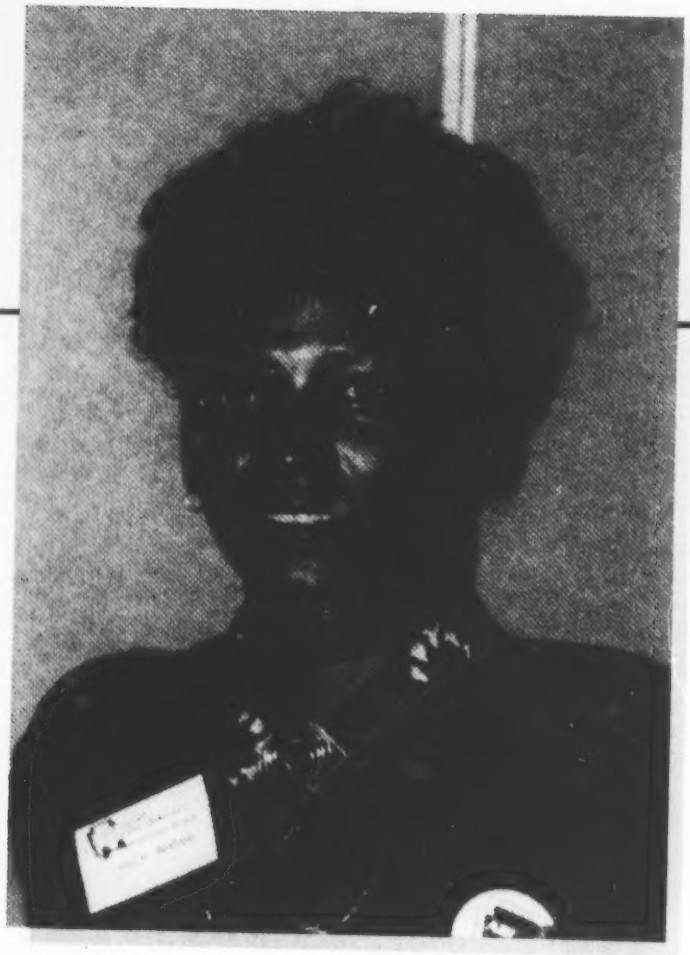
Adams County
Program: *Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12*
Sponsor: *Philip Monteith*

As a young boy, James R. Gourley remembers spending many nights in a car waiting for his father to come out of a bar, uncertain as to whether his father might fly into a rage and become physically abusive to Jim's mother. As a teenager, he became the target of his father's abuse while trying to protect his mother and younger siblings. His father's verbal abuse was constant. When Jim had to repeat the first and fifth grades, he was told he was stupid and would never amount to anything. In the seventh grade, after spending five months in bed convalescing from scarlet fever and rheumatic fever, he was passed on to the eighth grade because of his age. He struggled, improvised and endured high school till February of his senior year. Informed that there was no way he could pass, he left school to avoid the humiliation of not receiving a diploma.

Joining the Marines in 1968, he found himself again in a situation where he needed to read and memorize. Added to his frustrations were the letters from his mother detailing the continued abuse. The combination proved more than he could handle. Jim had a nervous breakdown and was given an honorable discharge. He soon got a job as a manual laborer. Conscientious, hard-working and dependable, he found himself being promoted. But when he was promoted to jobs that required him to do paperwork, he would quit before his employers learned he could not read. For a long time, he managed to hide his dark secret from his wife and two daughters. Suffering in silence, Jim's constant fear of failure led to depression and, in 1985, he was hospitalized after trying to take his life.

In 1987, Jim attended a Chapter I parents' meeting where he learned about supportive reading programs. At his wife's suggestion, he called the Gettysburg Area Literacy Council. Making that call was one of the hardest things he had ever done. Now he can laugh at the number of times he dialed and hung up quickly after the first ring. It was an uphill battle, calming his fears and overcoming his nervousness, but he stuck with it. By September 1989, Jim had completed *Laubach Skill Book 4.* When he was named the outstanding student of the year in 1990, Jim decided to try for his GED. He started evening classes September 1990 and graduated June 1991. He received his diploma in a cap-and-gown ceremony held at Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12 and was given an award for his outstanding accomplishment.

Jim's attendance at the Northeast Regional Adult Literacy Conference at Villanova University was made possible by a scholarship. An article submitted by him can be read in Laubach Literacy International's anthology *On My Mind.* Jim volunteers many hours a week with the Adams County Literacy Council and is currently serving for a second year on the board. He helps to run the Student Support Group and is an active member of the Community Relations Committee. He has made public service announcements for literacy on radio and speaks to high school students, girl scouts, church groups and other civic associations. When given an honorarium for his speech at a local library, he donated the entire amount to the literacy council. He also continues to be an active member of the Book Discussion Club. Although Jim remains at his job with a construction company, he is planning to become a literacy tutor.



"My life
is beginning today,
and because
mine is,
so are others'."

JOYCE UPSHAW

Allegheny County
Program: *Connelley Skill Learning Center*
Sponsor: *Albert Fascetti*

When Joyce Upshaw was very young, her dad left her mother to support her and her three brothers. Being poor and responsible for five people took its toll, and her mother turned to alcohol. Joyce had attended four different schools by the time she was in fourth grade. When her father failed to attend her sixth grade graduation, she took the watch he sent and "wound it till it broke." After that, she lost contact with him until she was 17.

At 17, Joyce got her own home, became pregnant, and miscarried. She left school in the 11th grade after the birth of her first daughter. At age 19, a second daughter was born. All of her children were fathered by the young man Joyce met in sixth grade and married in 1978, when she was 22. A few days after that wedding, her husband, an enlisted man, left for military service in Missouri. Joyce began drinking to dull her feelings of loneliness and insecurity.

In 1979, she moved to Texas with her husband and began working as a barmaid in the officers' club. Her proximity to alcohol, plus the fact that her husband was a heavy drinker, compounded her own problems. Drinking took its toll. The family was evicted from base housing and began to struggle financially. Joyce had a third child to save her marriage, then, she had her tubes tied without telling her husband. Although the marriage was a daily survival course, she truly loved him and wanted her children to be raised with a father.

Joyce made a deal with her brother. She would work and take care of him if he stayed with her children. She went back to work in a bar, where her drinking led to involvement with cocaine. After three suicide attempts, Joyce entered a local hospital for rehabilitation. She divorced her husband in 1987, not wanting her third daughter to grow up in the same negative environment as her other two had. At this time, Joyce was attending school for Food Service training. Two weeks before graduation, her lung collapsed. She did not graduate. Instead, she began cleaning offices. Then she started to smoke crack. She dwindled down to 93 pounds and, after another suicide attempt, entered a detox program. In 1987, she finally graduated from the Food Service Training program.

Despite her problems, she retained a strong belief in God and a strong work ethic. She completed her detox program and joined Narcotics Anonymous. She is still an active member. In 1990, Joyce passed the GED at the Connelley Skill Learning Center. This gave her the confidence to apply for a position as a child care aide with the Pittsburgh Public Schools. She is now working with the GED staff who help and encourage her. The Families for Learning Program, where she works and contributes many hours of overtime, is a family literacy program which promotes literacy at both an early and later age. Joyce is one of the "fort holders" for this program and promotes it as well as she promotes herself. She says: "My life is beginning today, and because mine is, so are others'."

"The main thing is to consider yourself just as good as the next person in order to overcome this fear of reading. I'm looking forward to improving my education!"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BERNARD ZENK

Allegheny County
Program: *Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council*
Sponsor: *Donald Block*

Bernard Zenk was 16 years old and in the ninth grade when his teachers recommended that he drop out of school. He was two years behind his classmates in academic work, so his teachers felt he would be better off learning a trade. Bernard took their advice and found an unskilled position in the printing department of the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*, a daily newspaper.

After several years at the newspaper, Bernard was offered an apprenticeship to become a printer. He turned down the offer because he felt he was not capable of doing the reading and other tasks required of a printer. He left the *Sun-Telegraph* and spent the rest of his career in low-level jobs at a brewing company.

When Bernard entered the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council's program in 1989, he was reading at a fifth-grade level. He had to overcome many difficulties to pursue his studies. He and his wife, Marjorie, both work and must share the care of their adult daughter, who has cerebral palsy and is paralyzed on her left side. In addition, they had to care for their grandchildren, aged 11 and 12, for more than a year until their son was able to establish a home for them.

Bernard has had two strokes, one in 1974 and the other in 1986. His hearing has been damaged and his speech slowed. Although he was undergoing speech therapy at the time of his second stroke, he used to shy away from social situations. As a result of the literacy program, his self-esteem has been raised, and he feels confident as a literacy advocate.

After two years in the literacy program, he now reads at a 12th grade level and has achieved all the goals he set for himself when he entered the program. He still attends a class for spelling and writing and is a very active member of the editorial board of the adult center's newsletter. This writing and editing fulfills his lifelong dream of working on that particular facet of production. He also is an active member of the New Reader Leaders, a committee of adult students that meets twice a month to advise the center on how to run its program. Bernard wants to continue his education by enrolling at a local community college.

Bernard has been an active supporter and promoter of the literacy program. With his own money, he paid for an advertisement in the local *Pennysaver* to recruit students for the program. He has spoken about literacy to senior citizens' organizations and various businesses. He has given talks and interviews on the subject to the local press. In addition, he has written to several local colleges asking them to encourage their students to do volunteer work in literacy programs. He is constantly looking for ways to promote the literacy effort in the community.

"Keep your dreams,
your hopes, and
you will
gain success."

13

BETTY ANN FRISBY

Chester County

Program: *Chester County Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Inc.*

Sponsor: *Kathy J. Kline*

In 1948, when she was in her sophomore year, Betty Ann Frisby left West Chester High School (now Henderson High). She was pregnant with her first child and there were no school programs for pregnant teens at that time. As a single mother on public assistance, Betty worked at several part-time jobs. For a while, she lived with relatives in New York and worked as a nurse's aide in a hospital. She returned, however, to public assistance after the birth of her next two children.

In 1962, following a nine-month stay in a hospital for a nervous breakdown, Betty returned to West Chester. She began a relationship with a man who, over the next 10 years, proved to be an alcoholic and physically and verbally abusive. During this time, she supported her family by working as an assistant cook for the Head Start program, and then worked for five years as a dosage packer at Wyeth Laboratories. In 1975, she became ill and was placed on a two-year leave of absence, which was changed to a disability retirement in 1977.

In 1979, this single mother was determined to set a good example for her nine children. She began attending night classes at the Chester County OIC. But, because of babysitting and health problems, she was unable to complete the program. The next year she tried again but did not succeed. In 1988, at the age of 57, after seven years' encouragement from the OIC recruiter, Betty returned to try once more. Even though she did not drive and had arthritis, she attended regularly, walking to classes regardless of weather conditions.

After six months at the 0-4 literacy level, she progressed to ABE work. By the fall of 1989, Betty's husband became increasingly agitated at her being out two nights a week. In spite of this, Betty persevered. By January 1990, when she had reached the GED level, she not only continued her studies, but also began to tutor students in the ESL and adult literacy classes. Betty took the test in April 1990 and missed passing it by five points. In May 1990, she took the math test again and obtained the five points she needed. She was now a GED graduate.

Betty was now ready to take charge of her life. She began to recognize that a pattern of mental abuse had existed in her home for many years. After much prayer with her minister and counseling with the Domestic Violence Center, Betty filed for a divorce. She also approached the assistant superintendent of the West Chester Area School District and discussed her dream of participating in graduation ceremonies. Her request was granted. She proceeded to have her yearbook pictures taken and to attend all senior class activities and was honored on Awards Day. On June 11, 1991, at 60 years of age, Betty marched as a member of the Henderson High School graduating class of 1991.

Betty is a volunteer tutor in the adult program and a member of the West Chester OIC's alumni committee. An inspiration to students in the program each and every day, she is currently attending the clerical training program to upgrade her typing skills in order to improve her ability as a volunteer. She is past chairperson of the education committee of the Salvation Army Home League, a member of her church's women's club and a volunteer on Friday evenings to serve meals to those in need.

"I never imagined it would open avenues such as going to college and learning specific skills to continue my education."

DAVID WINGARD
ERIE COUNTY

Program: *Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5*
Sponsor: *Mary Louise Gall*

In 1987, at the age of 38, David Wingard entered GED classes at the Union City High School. The only child of alcoholic parents, he was quarrelsome and inattentive in school. David received poor grades from all but his eighth grade science teacher, who showed an interest in him and encouraged him to believe that he was a unique and worthwhile person. He began drinking at 14 and, by the time he was 16, was staying out all night drinking himself unconscious. He quit school in the ninth grade and, at 17, he became a father. He enlisted in the Marine Corps as an easy way out of the situation.

David was sent to Vietnam during the Tet Offensive in 1968. Landing in Da Nang, the Marines were briefly trained in the use of their M16's and told what they could expect in the jungle. But nothing had prepared David for what occurred. After seeing his closest buddy's legs blown off by a booby trap, David, like many other Marines, began using pot on a regular basis to blot out the war and to help him get through each day. He was already a confirmed alcoholic, and his drug addiction would last another 20 years.

In combat, David received a bullet in his right lower leg and another in his upper right thigh. In April 1968, he was sent to the Philadelphia Naval Hospital, where he became addicted to "hard drugs." He was transferred and came home for a 30-day leave. During this leave, he was drinking and driving and was involved in a head-on collision that killed two people. David was not expected to survive the accident, but he did, and was then sentenced to a prison term in Pittsburgh.

After 20 reckless years, David admitted himself into the Care Unit of Hamot Hospital and attempted to face his many problems — drugs, alcohol, childhood abuse and Vietnam post-traumatic stress syndrome. He signed up for GED classes, but then dropped out of them. After much coaxing, he decided to try again. He became a faithful student and passed his GED test in September 1988. Under the GI Bill, David was admitted to Edinboro University's summer program and was chosen "the most diligent student." He is now a sophomore at the university, where he is studying to be a social worker, and has been on the Dean's List. He is a recovering alcoholic and drug user, and admits he has learned some hard lessons.

David is an encouragement to everyone in the adult education program. He is very frank about his drug and alcohol problems and will talk to anyone who needs some encouragement to go on with life. His life has been filled with many negative aspects, but he has used these negatives to help steer him toward a more positive outlook.

"If I give up
my dream, I will die
with my dream.
I know someday
I will reach
my goal."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

KHOM TUY

Lancaster County
Program: *Lancaster Adult Enrichment Center*
Sponsor: *Barbara Tyndall*

When Khom Tuy was five, her family fled their four-acre farm in Cambodia in order to escape battling armies. They settled in Phnom Penh. When the Khmer Rouge captured the city, Khom's mother left her with a babysitter. She later learned that her parents, two older brothers and three of her sisters had been killed. Khom was expelled from the city and spent a year in a Khmer Rouge refugee camp for children before she was released and told to go home.

Since she had no home to go to, Khom lived with a woman who had a son about her age. She ran away when she discovered that the woman was planning to make her marry her son. She found another home with a woman who wanted to be her foster mother. But after two months, the authorities forced her to return to the children's camp. There she was tortured and forced to watch the torture of others without showing emotion. Still a child, she was required to work 12 to 18 hours a day. The children were given only enough food to keep them alive, and none at all if their work wasn't considered adequate. When Vietnam took over Cambodia, Khom was reunited with her foster mother and, together, she and her new family walked out of Cambodia across fields embedded with land mines. The family reached Thailand, where they were interned for six months before being selected to come to the United States. It was 1979 and Khom was 14 years old. She had never been to school at all.

Khom enrolled in public school in the United States, but her problems were not over. Two months before she was 16, she was forced to marry a man 13 years her senior. The marriage was a disaster. Her husband's gambling took every cent they had, so she quit school to help pay off his debts. During the next 10 years Khom had three children. Knowing she couldn't read or write, her husband chided her for her "stupidity," tried to prevent her from going to church, and eventually tried to prevent her from starting school again. He threatened to kill her and her children if she so much as talked to another man. Khom, who had lived in fear all her life, decided she couldn't let her fear of her husband prevent her from changing her life.

In the spring of 1989, when she enrolled in ESL classes at the Lancaster Adult Enrichment Center, she was completely illiterate in both English and Cambodian. In September, supported by her church, teachers, fellow students, and friends, she moved into a women's shelter. She found an apartment and began working 57–62 hours a week in order to support her daughter and herself. Despite her long work hours and the fact that her job is physically demanding, she has managed to attend ABE classes daily for the past 2½ years. She is reading at a fifth grade level and is determined to obtain her GED in order to pursue a career as an interior decorator.

Since beginning the program, Khom has finalized her divorce, bought a car, become a U.S. citizen and purchased her own home. Her pride in her newfound ability to read has been an inspiration to her friends and other students in the program. Though she experienced the same frustrations that any adult beginning reader faces, she has never given up. Khom is a self-reliant woman whose courage in the face of overwhelming adversity makes her a wonderful role model, not only for fellow literacy students but for all Americans.

"A little faith,
hope, and prayer
will take us
a long way.
So be of good courage
and strive for
your goals."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IRENE ALLEN

Montgomery County
Program: *Eagleville Hospital*
Sponsor: *Kathleen Marks*

Irene Allen was the child of addicted parents who had no time for her. Her father was abusive and her mother simply did not want her. At the age of three months, she was given over to the care of a strict grandmother. Her grandmother was very religious and loved her the best she knew how. Irene remained with her until she was nine years old, at which point she was returned to her mother.

Irene had few friends with whom to share her childhood and no one who cared about how she felt. At age 11, she started running away from her troubles by experimenting with alcohol and drugs. By the time she was 16, she was an addict. When she became pregnant, her mother threw her out of the house. Thereafter, Irene floated from place to place, sure that no one wanted her.

She moved from one abusive relationship to another. At age 23, Irene found herself an uneducated, addicted parent of three. Her children were the only positives in her life, but as a result of her lifestyle, they were taken away from her. She had now lost her only source of love. In 1987, realizing that she was at a dead end, Irene entered Eagleville Hospital. She was deeply depressed and very angry, but ready to work.

Irene had attended eight different schools before she dropped out in the ninth grade because of pregnancy. At Eagleville Hospital, when she was told that she had to go to school again, she was scared. She felt she "didn't have the ability to learn." Her intake forms identified her as having borderline intelligence. However, once her mind was cleared of drugs, her fear of learning was conquered and she began to excel in her studies. Irene set many goals, including building up her self-esteem and furthering her education. She identified getting her GED as the best way to reach these goals.

When Irene passed her GED test, she was overwhelmed with joy at this "big accomplishment." She then attended a local Vo-Tech in order to acquire typing and business skills. She is currently a student at the Montgomery County Community College, where she is working toward an L.P.N. degree. She hopes to become a registered nurse. She is pursuing this goal while being a parent to two of her children and looking forward to a new baby.

Irene spends time with her children each day doing homework and teaching them the value of education. She is also active in her church, working along with her pastor to bring her message of sobriety and education to those parishioners who are in need. She leads by example, sharing her new insights, values, and goals. She will not forget the past, but now focuses on the future — a future filled with love, education, and hope.

"Once you set your mind on your goal, don't let anyone deter you. You can make it if you try."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JUANITA JAMES

Philadelphia County

Program: *Germantown Women's Educational Program*

Sponsor: *Rebecca Reumann*

Juanita James attended school through the 11th grade when illness interrupted her high school career. A loss of strength in her legs was her first sign of medical trouble. For the next year, she was in and out of a local hospital as different parts of her body were affected. Finally, after a frightening year of uncertainty, she was diagnosed as having lupus. After the onset of lupus, Juanita suffered from very bad headaches, which were somewhat alleviated when the doctors drained fluid off her brain. However, the drugs she was given over the years to treat the lupus had the effect of causing her bones to soften, and she developed degenerative hip disease. At different times she used a cane, a walker and a wheelchair. In March 1990, Juanita had a right hip replacement, and she is now able to walk without a cane most of the time.

Throughout these years, Juanita held onto her dream of returning to school to get her GED. When the headaches and lupus went into remission, she returned to school. But when she began studying, the headaches returned. Her doctors said that the excitement and stress of going back to school had caused them to flare up. They said she would never be able to learn. In September 1990, Juanita enrolled in the Germantown Women's Educational Program. She decided that she was going to take the first step of "saying I can do it, regardless of what they said." She felt, "nothing's going to stop me this time." And nothing did.

Juanita worked hard in and out of class and shared her thoughts and ideas in class discussions and in writing. Her enthusiasm was infectious and her presence always added a great deal to class discussions. Although she sometimes was absent for health reasons, she always returned. In May 1991, she learned that she had passed the GED test with many points to spare. She continued attending classes through the end of the semester in order to work on the computer and because she enjoyed participating.

In addition to her educational activities, Juanita is very active in her church, Temple Shalom, and last summer worked as a children's program coordinator, setting up the program, arranging field trips, and working on other logistics. She volunteers regularly at her church's Food Cupboard and directs her church choir. This year, her five-year-old son joined the Cub Scouts, and she plans to become a den mother. She serves on the board of GWEP because she hopes to "be an encouragement to other students."

Juanita is planning to become a juvenile lawyer. She explains that she has been working with kids all her life and has seen the many issues that affect them, such as abuse and drug addiction. She feels children affected by these things need a person who knows the law and who can give them some motherly compassion. This fall, she began exploring academic programs at Temple University and the Community College of Philadelphia in order to determine which will best help her reach her goals.

ACHIEVEMENT
ABLE
Achievement
Award
EXCELLENCE BASED ON LEARNING

"My grandmother always told me you can do anything you want if you put your mind to it and try hard enough."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ALICE REDMAN

Philadelphia County

Program: *Lutheran Settlement House Women's Program*

Sponsor: *Carol Goertzel*

Alice Redman's parents deserted her when she was six weeks old, leaving her in the care of her grandmother, who earned $20 a week as a domestic. There was no money to buy clothes, and Alice was dressed in the hand-me-downs of her much older aunt. She remembers nights when her dinner consisted of bread with sugar on it. Her house had no gas, electricity or indoor plumbing, and she often went to school dirty. Although she was interested in her schoolwork, school was a frightening place to be. Because of her old, poorly-fitting clothing, and her dirty appearance, the other children were cruel to her. Schoolwork was never easy and she now realizes that she must have been laboring all her life with an unrecognized learning disability. Alice had to repeat sixth grade, and although she did learn to read, she never fully mastered basic math or learned to write more than a paragraph.

The one person who was kind to Alice was her boyfriend. In eighth grade, when she was 14, she became pregnant. Afraid to confide in her grandmother, she ran away from home and married her boyfriend. Her family disowned her. Her husband never held a job in the three years of their marriage, and her grandmother wound up caring for Alice's two children because she couldn't afford to keep them. Finally, Alice obtained a divorce and reclaimed her children. She made three unsuccessful attempts to finish her education, but each time her desperate family situation interfered with her efforts.

Twenty years later in 1986, Alice enrolled in the Lutheran Settlement House (LSH) Woman's Program. She remarried and was the mother of five children, now grown or teenagers. She and her second husband were enjoying some stability in their lives. She decided to make one more attempt to finish her education, saying that she felt that "if I didn't do it this time, I never would." The most difficult part of school for her was "just remembering all that I had forgotten." In fact, she had to learn the basic skills in mathematics and writing. She persevered and, in June 1987, was awarded her GED.

Upon receiving her GED, Alice began volunteering her time at LSH as a tutor and an assistant in the computer room. The students appreciated her compassion for them, her faith in their ability to achieve personal goals and her understanding of their lives. She was hired as a part-time teacher. Her high retention rate of students in her classes gave early evidence of her value to the program. Several of the students who came to her as virtual non-readers succeeded in obtaining their GEDs within one school year. She was then employed on a full-time basis and is still in that role today.

Alice has acquired many skills in her three years of full-time employment. She is currently being trained as a tutor trainer. Her sincere belief that tutors make an important difference in people's lives informs her presentations. Her own story provides a particularly effective example of the potential that adult learners bring to the tutoring situation. She has taken three courses at the Community College of Philadelphia and intends to finish her college education with attainment of teacher certification.

"Strive for all the things you want in life and don't give up. You are as good as anyone else and can accomplish anything you want."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IVAN COOPER

Philadelphia County

Program: *Philadelphia Opportunities Industrialization Centers, Inc.*

Sponsor: *Phyllis Lawrence*

Ivan Cooper has survived a past that includes living in institutions and a total of ten operations, which have left him confined to a wheelchair and unable to walk. But he has not submitted to confinement. At age 39, he has dreams of becoming self-supporting despite his disability.

Since birth, Ivan has been fighting spina bifida, a debilitating disease that is caused by a congenital defect in the walls of the spinal canal. He continues to receive therapy at the McGee and Moss Rehabilitation Center. He explains that it has not been easy to attempt integrating himself into society's mainstream. He continually experiences the insensitivity and bias of "normal people." However, his tenacious desire to complete his education and become a functional member of society brought him to the Philadelphia OIC, Inc. in June 1991. Ivan attends daily classes by wheeling himself 35 blocks to the center. Even though his wheelchair is not motorized, he has mapped out a route to follow that he is comfortable with.

But Ivan is used to challenges. At the age of four, his mother decided that he was too difficult to care for because she had nine other children to support. He was placed in a foster home. He never knew his family and still does not have a relationship with them.

While undergoing several operations, he was transferred from foster home to foster home because he was perceived as a burden to his foster parents. Throughout the many rehabilitation centers and foster homes, his confidence decreased and he became very bitter. He was not able to stay in school and eventually dropped out in the fifth grade.

Since being at the OIC, Ivan appears less defensive and more sensitive to others. He is recognized by his classmates as "another student" and feels accepted. Although he prefers to be treated like everyone else, he is truly a role model for disabled students.

Ivan enjoys doing things for himself in his 16th floor three-room apartment. He plays on the wheelchair basketball team and takes karate classes at a local recreational center. He is his own cook and cleaning person, and does his own laundry. He also runs errands, shops and pays the bills for some of his neighbors who are even less fortunate than he. He has developed many strengths from his life's experiences that have proven beneficial to him and others.

His education goal is to obtain a GED, and his career goal is to become a computer technician or a copy machine repairman. Can he do it? As Ivan would say, "Perserverance is a virtue."

1992 OUTSTANDING ADULT STUDENTS

Left to right, front row: I. Cooper, K. Tuy, B. Frisby, J. James, B. Zenk
Left to right, back row: I. Allen, J. Gourley, D. Wingard, J. Upshaw, A. Redman

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Pennsylvania Department of Education will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, ancestry, handicap, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who need information about accommodations for handicapped persons, should contact the Affirmative Action Officer/Contract Compliance Officer, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333.

SUCCESS STORIES: FROM LEARNING TO EARNING
Project Director and Editor: Sherry Royce
Field Managers:
Kathy Fasano, Carol Goertzel, Nancy Woods

#98-2002 FY 1991-92
Royce & Royce, Inc.
1938 Crooked Oak Drive
Lancaster, PA 17601

This booklet is a PDE Adult Education 353 Special Project. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position of the Pennsylvania Department of Education nor the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement should be inferred.

For additional copies of this publication, please contact Cheryl Harmon, telephone number, 1-800-992-2283. Out-of-state telephone number 1-717-782-9541.